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This publication describes the administration, course content, and organization of the English Advanced Placement Program in New York state. Administrative concerns include the time, educational resources, and number of students necessary for a successful course; the qualifications of the teacher; the ability and interest of the student; and methods of marking advanced course papers. The literary concepts--e.g., the speaker and point of view, form, and style--to be covered in the course are presented as well as the aims of the instruction in composition and language. Titles of literary works are suggested. (LH)

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The Advanced Placement Program

English

A Course Description for Schools
in
New York State

T 001 508

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development
Albany, New York 12224
1967

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Foreword

In 1958, the New York State Education Department published a course description for the Advanced Placement Program in English. The present publication is a revised edition of that earlier document.

It is not a syllabus. It should not alter successful, ongoing programs. It does not imply that a college-level course is either the best or the only way to provide for high school students with special aptitudes in English. Other possibilities include accelerated programs and electives, and local school systems are expected to develop those curriculums which best fulfill the needs of their students.

Like its predecessor, this publication is intended for those schools which elect to offer a course for the Advanced Placement Program in English. It has been written specifically for teachers and administrators who have had no direct experience with the program, but some of the material on the following pages should also prove useful to those who have worked with advanced classes.

Both the original and the revised manuscripts were written by Isabel S. Gordon, who initiated the course for the Advanced Placement Program in English offered at the Bronx High School of Science. The revised form was then reviewed by Kingsley Ervin, Jr., Chairman of the English Department at Athens College, a secondary school in Athens, Greece, formerly at Horace Mann School, New York City; Jeane H. Geehr, Associate Professor of English at Vassar College; and Franklin G. Myers, Chairman of the English Department at Scarsdale High School — all of whom have been readers for the Advanced Placement Examination in English. The final draft was prepared for publication by the following Department members: James C. Crabtree, Associate in English Education; W. Robert Kelley, formerly Supervisor of Education for the Gifted (now Associate Professor of Education at the State University of New York at Albany); and Rita A. Sator, Associate in Secondary Curriculum.

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A Word to the Administrator

The Course

The Advanced Placement Program originated in the exploratory efforts of the School and College Study of 1952–55 supported by the Fund for the Advancement of Education. At that time, a small group of public and private secondary schools developed a series of college-level courses for academically talented high school seniors, and certain colleges agreed to give advanced placement and/or credit to those who demonstrated satisfactory achievement in them. The number of participants grew; and in 1955, the College Entrance Examination Board — aided by the continued support of the Fund — became the sponsor.

The Advanced Placement Program presently consists of a series of examinations devised by the College Entrance Examination Board to measure a student's achievement in those subjects in which he elects to be examined. There are no prerequisites for taking the test. However, recognizing that only exceptional students can perform adequately on advanced placement examinations without having had a high level of instruction, the Board has published a series of course descriptions designed to aid schools in preparing their students for the test. Copies of the "acorn book," *Advanced Placement Program: Course Descriptions,* are available at a slight charge from the College Entrance Examination Board, Publications Order Office, Box 592, Princeton, N.J. 08540.

Granting advanced placement and/or credit is the prerogative of the individual college. If possible, therefore, a course of study developed for the Advanced Placement Program in any subject should meet the requirements of first-year college courses in that subject. It is difficult to develop an acceptable plan of study for the Advanced Placement Program in English, however, for there is no uniform pattern among colleges for first-year courses in English. Some offer composition; others, literature; and still others, a combination of the two in varying proportions. What, then, should a course in AP English comprise? The College Entrance Examination Board recommends an intensive study of both literature and composition. Since many colleges accept the CEEB recommendations, the course de-

scription in the acorn book is the basis for the material in this publication. The guidelines are general, however, and the local school system has the ultimate responsibility for devising a detailed course of study which will develop in its students the skills and appreciations necessary to make them perceptive readers and effective writers.

Administrative Concerns

Establishing the Advanced Placement Program in English demands thoughtful preparation. It requires careful selection of both teacher and students; flexibility of scheduling; ready availability of library, curriculum, and cultural experience resources; and a certain amount of parent education.

One of the most important considerations is time. Ideally, the class period should be long enough to allow for intensive literary analysis and extensive practice in composition. In addition, ample time should be made available to the teacher for the increased class preparation, detailed review of student work, and individual teacher-student conferences which a course for the Advanced Placement Program in English necessitates. This can be achieved by reducing the teacher's extra-instructional responsibilities and/or his teaching load.

Another consideration is class size. On the assumption that large classes result in less thorough training, most advanced sections are kept small. The restrictions vary from school to school, but it is generally agreed that the size of any one class in advanced placement should be limited to that number which will allow the active participation of each student in every class period.

A third concern is the ready availability of educational resources. Since the students should form the habit of independent reading, it is essential that the school library have an extensive collection of literature. Audiovisual materials — particularly those which the student can use by himself — and resource materials in related subject areas such as the social studies, languages, and the arts are also helpful.

The Teacher

The teacher of the Advanced Placement Program in English should be exceptionally well qualified.

He must know his subject thoroughly and be able to communicate both his knowledge and his enthusiasm to his students. Since there is no prescribed list of works to be studied, he must have a broad

and discerning knowledge of both classical and contemporary literature and be familiar with recent developments in literary scholarship in order to select wisely. More concerned with reading in depth than in breadth, he must be able to lead his class beyond mere comprehension to a mature understanding and appreciation of thought and language. He must come to know his students and be sensitive to their individual needs. Since able students are quick to challenge, he must also be self-confident, flexible, sincere, and as eager as his class to pursue a new idea. In short, the teacher of AP English should be a dedicated teacher, thoroughly grounded in his subject area, committed to the program, and willing to devote both time and effort to preparation and evaluation beyond that required for regular classes.

The Student

Whether students are selected for the Advanced Placement Program in English at the end of the 11th year or earlier, the procedure is essentially the same. It usually involves consideration of the following factors:

- Teacher recommendation
- The student's permanent record
- Guidance counselor recommendation
- The student's interest
- Parental consent

In most schools, after a student has been recommended for advanced placement by at least one of his teachers, his permanent file is checked for pertinent data concerning his intelligence, aptitude, and achievement. His total program is reviewed in terms of academic load and probable educational goals; for in order to devote the necessary time and energy required for Advanced Placement English, he must be secure in his other academic subjects. Personal qualities such as maturity, stamina, and work habits are also considered.

Most important, however, is the student's eagerness to take the course — not so much for the academic credit as for the intrinsic value of the work involved. Such eagerness indicates more than ambition; it indicates a feeling of need for a more challenging course of study. The student who has this readiness usually exhibits it in

other ways. He reads widely and perceptively; he is acquainted with a number of literary classics; he demonstrates considerable ability in writing; and he assumes the responsibility for much of his own learning.

In many schools, the student's parents are consulted before he is admitted to the course. They are usually pleased to be involved in the decision and frequently become enthusiastic about the program and their child's participation in it. At the very least, securing parental consent may preclude later misunderstandings about the rigorous demands of the course; the evaluation of the student's assignments; and additional expenses arising from books, trips, and the cost of the Advanced Placement Examination.

The Evaluation of Student Work

Grading the papers and evaluating the classwork of students in an advanced course are always problems. If the marking system is the same as that used in other courses, the results will be misleading in terms of the student's achievement in advanced placement work; if it is based on standards of evaluation for first-year college courses or on a scale of comparison within the advanced placement class, the results will be unfair to the student in terms of his academic standing in the school or potential for college admission.

The 15-point scale used by AP readers to evaluate the essay portions of the AP Examination[1] is useful for marking student assignments; but a system of notation consistent with school policy is necessary for report cards, permanent records, and transcripts. Some schools adopt the scale as a means of measuring grades. Others guarantee a minimum mark to students enrolled in the Advanced Placement Program or use grade-weighting or quality-point systems. The method varies.

Whatever the system used, however, it must be remembered that advanced placement courses were originally developed as another means of enabling " each to become all that he is capable of being." The system of evaluation must therefore reinforce, not negate, that function.

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[1] 1–3 — no credit (at the college level)
4–6 — credit
7–9 — good
10–12 — honors
13–15 — high honors

Useful Publications

Materials for the Advanced Placement Program in English are usually selected by the teacher of the course. CEEB publications useful in course development are listed on the last page of *A Guide to the Advanced Placement Program,* which is available without charge from the College Entrance Examination Board, Publications Order Office, Box 592, Princeton, N.J. 08540.

The Content and Organization of the Course

General Description

In its *Advanced Placement Program: Course Descriptions,* the College Entrance Examination Board defines the content of the course in English in the following terms:

> The reading in the course includes various literary genres — the novel, the play, expository literature, poetry, and the short story. Through the study of more than one representative work of an author the student observes consistency and variety in theme, language, tone, structure, and symbolism within that writer's canon of works. His intensive study of a small but representative sampling from the various genres and the various periods prepares him for wider independent reading. In class discussion and in analytical writing he is responsible for accurate reading and interpretation of literature, for arriving at opinions about what he has read, and for being prepared to present and defend those opinions. His growth in understanding is demonstrated by his ability to work with what he has read and discussed and to integrate his various intellectual and aesthetic experiences.

The course description is followed by " appropriate examples of authors and of works." *The list does not constitute a syllabus:* it is simply a series of examples of the kinds of material which are suitable for study in an advanced placement class in English.

All of the selections on the list were originally written in English. In general, translated works should be assigned as corollary reading rather than included as part of the basic curriculum, because they cannot be examined for the author's use of language, for specific tone and mood resulting from his style and word choice, or his selection of symbol and image. No rigid rule can be established, however; for the King James Version of the Bible is considered an English work of art and is therefore a valuable subject for the study of the use of language, and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* is significant in regard to the structure of the novel. The *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and other classics from world literature are also useful in providing another dimension for the student's understanding of theme, structure, character, symbolism, imagery, or special effects as they have been de-

veloped in particular works. However, recognizing that the proper subjects for analysis in an advanced placement class in English are works written in English, the College Entrance Examination Board includes only these in its list of examples and requires that the student use English or American selections in his answers to certain questions on the examination.

In determining the content of a course in AP English, primary attention should be given to the following considerations. The literature selected for study should be appropriate for advanced work, yet not so remote from the student's background and experience that an inordinate amount of preparation is required. Many schools use texts available for their regular 12th-year English classes as a nucleus, thus placing the emphasis where it belongs in advanced work — on closer and more sensitive reading. However, the literature portion of AP English is intended neither as a survey, nor as a course in the structural analysis of genres. *It is a study of close reading techniques* intended to develop in the student a respect for the precision with which an author communicates ideas, defines attitudes, and evokes responses. The most important criterion in the selection of specific literary works, therefore, is that they be *of sufficient richness to sustain analysis.*

Since the Advanced Placement Examination emphasizes literature and usually includes the analysis of a poem, most schools allow a larger proportion of class time for literature than for composition. However, instruction in writing should never be merely an adjunct to the analysis of literature; it should be a systematic study of writing skills and techniques, with its own purpose and logic. Class time should be allotted not only for instruction in composition, but for student writing and constructive criticism as well. Short papers assigned frequently and with regularity and occasional longer papers should require the student to develop his theme in a variety of ways, each of which is designed to serve a particular purpose and to achieve a particular effect. It is therefore important that he become aware of the variety of techniques which can be employed and learn how to determine the most effective of these for any given assignment. Finally, because criticism and revision are basic to writing instruction, the student's papers should be carefully and thoughtfully reviewed, discussed with him while his ideas are still fresh, and then revised.

Recognizing the importance of specific instruction in writing, many schools begin the year with a formal unit in composition which sets the standard of writing for the entire course. Whatever the plan of organization, the study of composition should make of the student a conscious craftsman; that is, he should become a responsible writer, able to express a well-developed theme in clear, precise prose with some degree of style and tone.

Literature and Language

In the literature portion of a course in AP English, the student's attention should be focused on the close reading of the works selected for study. Examples of what is meant by close reading are readily available in such sources as Brooks and Warrens' *Understanding Fiction* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959), Brooks' *The Well Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1947), Brower's *The Fields of Light: An Experiment in Critical Reading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), and Pannwitt's *The Art of Short Fiction* (New York: Ginn and Company, 1964). Although the sophisticated reader often responds automatically to the many dimensions of a work of art, the student needs conscious training in the techniques of close reading in order to become aware of the significance of the details, incidents, language, and patterns of organization deliberately chosen by the author to lead his reader to that " moment of illumination " which is the true climax of a work of art. Literary selections should therefore be read in their entirety and background materials used only when they make a clear contribution to the fuller understanding and enjoyment of the work. In addition, specific instruction should be given to deepen the student's comprehension and appreciation of literature by sharpening his perception in the following understandings:

Statement and Implication

The student may have difficulty in discovering exactly what the author is trying to say, particularly in a selection from poetry, the poetic drama, or fiction written in the stream-of-consciousness mode. Sometimes the difficulty stems from semantics or from syntax. For example, the student's understanding of the phrase " naked shingles of the world " is dependent upon his awareness that the word " shingles " means " beaches " in this instance, and his understanding of the lines " The expense of

spirit in a waste of shame/Is lust in action " is dependent upon his identification of the subject of the sentence. The student should also be made more keenly aware of implication. He must come to realize that what is left unsaid is often more important than what is said, that a simple shift in language may signal a significant change in meaning, and that the relationship of wording to context bears a message in itself.

Purpose and Organization

The student must remember that the author has a purpose for writing and that — however lifelike or even historically sound they may seem — the characters, dialog, and events in a given selection have been carefully constructed and ordered to accomplish that purpose. As he reads, the student must therefore ask himself: Why these events? Why at this time and in this place? From whose point of view are they seen, and why?

The Speaker and Point of View

Some instruction will be needed in the functions of the speaker and of the point of view in a work of art. The student realizes readily enough that he is to identify with a first-person narrator and to see through his eyes; but he is not always aware that the view is therefore colored or incomplete, and that this selectivity of focus is related to the theme of the work. In poetry and strongly autobiographical novels, he must learn both to differentiate between the author and the author's " mask " or " persona " and to determine in given instances how nearly the two are one. For example, is it truly Shakespeare who speaks in his sonnets? Is it Dickens or David Copperfield or a blend of both whose opinions are expressed in the novel? Is it Coleridge or the wedding guest who derives a moral from " The Rime of the Ancient Mariner "? The student must come to realize that the existence of a " voice " postulates both an audience and an occasion and that these, in turn, limit and order what is said. He will also need help in learning to determine the point of view in a third-person narrative; for, although there is no " speaker," it is not always the " omniscient author " through whose eyes events are seen. Further, he must learn that in some plays a chorus or a chorus-substitute provides a commentary which may, or again may not, reflect the attitudes of the dramatist.

Form and Structure

Some consideration should be given to the structure of a particular work. The student must come to sense the appropriateness of pattern to thought, the relationship between form and content. He should ask himself such questions as: What does Shakespeare achieve through the dramatic form that could not be achieved by means of a prose narrative? What does O'Neill's variation of the Greek tragic drama accomplish in *Mourning Becomes Electra*? Why is the longer prose narrative more appropriate for *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness* than either the dramatic or short story form? How does the stream-of-consciousness technique relate to the purposes of Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and William Faulkner? How effective are the simplicity of style in *The Old Man and the Sea* and the encyclopedic conglomeration of structural devices in *Moby Dick?* The study of poetic drama, in which the style of writing changes from speaker to speaker, can serve as an excellent introduction to the adaptation of form to content and aesthetic purpose.

The structure of poetry requires special consideration. In this area it is helpful for the student to have command of a certain number of technical terms — iambic, trochaic, pentameter, hexameter, heroic couplet, Italian sonnet, Spenserian stanza, blank verse, free verse, etc. The terms themselves are unimportant; the meter or the free rhythms of a poem, the use of rhyme or the absence of it, the modification of poetic devices to create word-music, and the deliberate and careful organization of line and pattern to express both sound and sense — these are the proper subjects for study. The student should readily recognize the ballad stanza; but can he understand why Coleridge chose to use it in " The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," and what he accomplished by his variations on the form? The student should have no difficulty in differentiating between the English and the Italian sonnet; but can he understand what these differences achieve, and why Shakespeare preferred the one and Milton the other? Certainly he should be able to see how Pope's sharply cut and emphatically rhymed heroic couplets differ from the flowing ones of Chaucer or Keats or Browning, but does he perceive how well each man's choice reflects his thought? Can he recognize the results of Gerard Manley Hopkins' innovations — his hyphenated and internal rhymes, his strange use of allitera-

tion, and his "sprung" rhythms? Once he understands the functions of rhyme, meter, and caesura, the student should better appreciate the effects of freer stanzaic forms and bring a deeper sensitivity to his reading of the poetry of his own time.

Tone, Atmosphere, and Style

Because these are inextricably related to its theme, the tone, atmosphere, and style of a work of art should receive treatment. The student is probably aware that the author's selection and ordering of events and details, his choice of word and image, and his variation of sentence form and rhythm create a world in which — for the space of a reading, at least — his characters live and breathe. But he may need to learn that the characters and their world in a piece of fiction are not necessarily lifelike; that artificiality and stylization may serve the author's purpose better than realism; that the particular style of a selection may be the product of the author's times, interests, or purposes; and that what is important is the reader's understanding of that style. His primary concern in this area should be whether or not particular statements or actions are appropriate for a given character within the framework of the circumstances. Where there are distortions — as in *Wuthering Heights* and *Murder in the Cathedral* — the student may discover that, considered in relation to other aspects of the selection, they are more "true-to-life" than factual representations would be.

Some instruction will also be needed in the recognition and interpretation of irony. The student should already be acquainted with irony of fate — as it functions in *Macbeth*, for example, or *The Return of the Native*. He may even appreciate the use of dramatic irony in situations where a character on the stage is understood in one way by the person to whom he speaks, and in quite another by a third character or by the audience. But the student will need help in learning to recognize and interpret less obvious uses as, for example, when a character speaks "truer than he himself knows"; and the appreciation of irony in lyric or narrative poetry may be most difficult for him.

The student will already realize that the opening lines of a poem, story, novel, or play serve as a prelude to set the theme, the pace, and the mood; but he should learn to detect from the author's style whether the work is to be taken literally, fancifully, or iron-

ically and whether the characters are to be believed, admired, or ridiculed. If possible, he should also learn to relate the style of a selection to the times and philosophy of the author, and to evaluate its effectiveness in achieving the author's purpose.

Allusion, Imagery, and Symbol

To some extent, the student will respond automatically to literary allusion, imagery, and symbol; and his exposure to works of art in previous years should have equipped him to recognize many of the references, to visualize the images, and to realize that these devices are an intrinsic part of a work of art. But his awareness must be sharpened, and additional instruction will be needed to compensate for the teenager's limited background and experience. Often the meaning of a selection is lessened, or even totally lost for him, if he does not understand an image or a reference within it. For example, he must recognize " the lame balloonman " and " the goat-footed " in E. E. Cummings' " in Just-spring," or he will not see that the tone has shifted from the simple delight of children in spring games to a more profound comment on adolescent responses to quite different games; and thus he may miss the total significance of the poem.

He must also come to realize that, in many selections, the image is the message. For example, in the poem often entitled " The Scoffers," which begins with the line " Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau," Blake's image of sand blown into the wind has been taken as an expression of those perceptions which the poet associated with the purely intellectual. The image implies sterility, fragmentation, and those annoying qualities of irritating the eye and shifting underfoot; but in regard to the discrete elements of science — " the atoms of Democritus, / And Newton's particles of light " — it implies something else: " And every sand becomes a Gem / Reflected in the beams divine . . . " which " blinds the mocking eye," but " shines . . . in Israel's path." Thus, even before the reader learns why Blake has rejected Voltaire and Rousseau or understands why the poet's religion and philosophy make Biblical allusions appropriate, the image of sand has determined for him the tone or climate of thought which pervades the poem and establishes the conditions of discovery. It then becomes the heart of the poem's meaning. Special guidance will be needed to familiarize the student with the heuristic

and tone-setting functions of imagery in selections such as this one from Blake and to help him in interpreting the often private images and apparently arbitrary symbols of contemporary poetry.

In close reading, the student learns to decipher a sort of shorthand, the representation of larger-than-life action in symbol. Recognizing the play of light and dark, of sight and blindness, of objectivity and emotionalism are indispensable to his understanding of *King Lear* and *Oedipus Rex*. He must be attuned to the symbolism of environmental detail, such as the recurrence of storm images in *Wuthering Heights*. And he must recognize the author's use of objects: Thomas Wolfe's " a stone, a leaf, and a door "; Joyce's chalice; Hemingway's bull and marlin; the painted chest in *Giants in the Earth*; the captain's ship in *The Secret Sharer*; and the laundry basket in *Death of a Salesman*. A word of caution, however. The student may so enjoy the decoding process that he will need to restrain himself from finding symbolism in everything that he reads. It is important that he learn to read responsibly; that is, that he learn to get everything he can out of a selection, *without reading into it* anything which is not there. The selection itself is the ultimate resource, and the student should be required to justify his interpretations with specific reference to the text.

Essential to the analysis of allusion, image, and symbol are the Bible and mythology. If the student can recognize the archetypal patterns in the selections he studies — if he can see that Arrowsmith, like Galahad, is in quest of a Holy Grail; that divine power is challenged not only by Lucifer and Prometheus, but also by Dr. Faustus, Captain Ahab, and Jude; that the lost Garden of Eden exists in *Green Mansions* and *The Tempest*; and that the Biblical story of sin and redemption is repeated in *The Scarlet Letter, Lord Jim,* and *Billy Budd* — he will come to understand that a work of art is, in reality, a metaphor for human life.

Repetitions, Parallels, and Contrasts

The student will need instruction in the function of repetitions, parallels, and contrasts in a work of art. For example, he must come to realize that the repetition and reversal of the two words " fair " and " foul " within the framework of a parallel structure in the opening line of *Macbeth* signals the *leitmotiv* for the entire

play. He must see that the recurrence of images of duplicity in the same selection and of corruption and disease in *Hamlet* bears a structural relationship to the theme in each case. He must learn to differentiate between the use of repetition for emphasis, for parallelism, and for contrast, and to determine the purpose for its inclusion in the work as a whole. For example, he must become sensitive to the use of parallel characters as foils, as in the case of Macbeth and Banquo, Ahab and the master of the *Rosebud*, or the captain and Leggatt; of actions repeated or reversed to foreshadow or reveal; of situations juxtaposed; or of the same words and phrases spoken under different circumstances.

Reading at this level of scrutiny and appreciation — with attention to precise statement and implication, to the sound and imagery and emotional tone of the selection under study — the student will realize how delicately designed a work of art must be. He will understand how many careful choices of detail are required to create an atmosphere, how many selections of incident are needed to exhibit progression in the development of a character, how many variations of language and diction must be made to establish the individuality of each character's speech — in short, how much attention the artist must give to both the whole and the parts of his creation. And when the student begins to see that great literature is revelation, that it is the written expression of a profoundly felt, profoundly considered view of life, he will have come a long way toward that maturity of appreciation that the close reading techniques detailed here have been designed to develop.

Composition and Language

It is difficult to differentiate the level of competence in writing expected of students in the Advanced Placement Program from that expected of competent high school seniors. Written work in either area should exhibit a fundamental knowledge of sentence structure, paragraph development, and standard organization patterns; reveal a developing maturity of thought, command of vocabulary, and sensitivity to language; and demonstrate the writer's responsibility for substantiating his statements with logical reasoning and appropriate detail.

The essential difference is one of refinement. For example, in his writing, the AP student should be able to select appropriate patterns of organization, combine them, and adapt them to his particular purpose. He should be able to distinguish between major themes and their subdivisions and to express even complex ideas in a logical and unified manner. And he should be able to select and maintain a tone appropriate for his purpose, his audience, and the occasion. He may also achieve a degree of subtlety in his thinking and learn to use words, examples, comparisons, syntax, and organization to convey emotional as well as logical conviction to his reader. Further, as he develops an awareness of nuance, patterning, and shifts of patterning in the tone, style, and point of view of selections in his reading, he may even demonstrate some use of these in his writing.

It is evident, therefore, that no student should be participating in the Advanced Placement Program in English who has not sufficiently mastered the mechanics and conventions of writing to be able to devote his attention to his thought and the effectiveness with which he can express it. He must examine his ideas to be sure that what he wishes to say is worth saying, and he must examine his words to be sure that he has actually said what he intended to say. The work he finally submits should have *imagination*, in the sense that it is concerned with the perception of relationships and meanings; *integrity*, in the sense that it faces a proposed problem squarely and deals with it without equivocation; and *responsibility*, in the sense that its conclusions are based on examined premises and logical support, rather than on sweeping generalizations or purely subjective judgments.

The achievement of these aims might best be approached through the combined study of composition and literature; that is, the study of models which illustrate specific writing techniques might be amplified by the reading of stimulating essays, even when the models have been excerpted from precisely similar works of literature. Selections from Plato, Thoreau, A. N. Whitehead, Joseph Wood Krutch, E. B. White, and T. S. Eliot are useful for this purpose; but care should be taken that the student have some basis of experience for responding to the views expressed in the essays he is assigned to read.

Written assignments should be frequent and varied, since much practice is needed in both writing and revising. Occasionally, longer essays might be included. The emphasis should always be on strength rather than length, however, and instruction in the several techniques of exposition will be needed if the student is to write longer papers

without resort to padding. Class time should be made available for writing, and some papers should be written entirely during the class period in order to train the student to use his time economically in an examination situation.

Special instruction will be needed in each of the following areas:

Limiting the Subject

Before one begins to write, he must obviously have something to say. The student's first problem, then, is to limit his subject to a specific and valid aspect of the assignment; for unless he knows exactly what he intends to write about, he cannot develop his ideas clearly, forcefully, and meaningfully. Few high school students realize that they can say more that is worth saying about a specific subject than about a general one. Those in advanced courses in particular often tend to select grandiose psychological or philosophical concepts such as "crime and punishment," "existentialism," "eschatology," "humanism," or "the art of tragedy." The student must come to realize that the amount of research and writing required for the development of such sweeping topics could not possibly be accomplished as a class assignment. The student must therefore learn to limit the subject of his essay to one which is worth developing within the confines of his purpose, time, energy, and ability.

Stating the Theme

Having found a manageable subject, the student must then decide what he intends to say about it. He cannot wait until he has finished writing before he decides what his essay will establish. However, he may find that he cannot formulate a theme until he has done some reading and considerable thinking about his subject. It is sometimes helpful for the student to crystallize his thinking by preparing a written statement of his general purpose for writing about the subject he has chosen. If he then lists his thoughts on the subject as they occur to him — noting informally any reference, quotations, or examples he may wish to include in the essay — he can review the list of items, delete those which are irrelevant or unimportant, and determine the idea to which the remaining notations seem pertinent. He should then be able to state in a single sentence the thesis for his paper. If he has planned carefully, the thesis sentence should be neither

too broad nor too trivial; it should represent a valid and challenging theme consistent with his original purpose.

Organizing the Essay

Once he has selected his subject and decided what he intends to say about it, the student must determine how to present his ideas most effectively. He must learn to work out the main lines of his discussion before he begins to write, in order to preclude rambling aimlessly from one point to another and losing sight of the subject and theme as he writes. Some students fail to realize that the various sections of an essay are not additions to the theme — as they tend to become in unplanned writing — but rather logical components of the theme, determined by the early application of a specific principle of division. Planning requires the student to select a pattern of organization or a combination of patterns, and the study of the various types of analysis is especially helpful in this determination. Many students feel that conscious structuring is artificial and attempt either to avoid it entirely or to disguise their practice of it. However, the study of effective models usually demonstrates convincingly the usefulness of this technique.

Introducing the Essay

An essay can be written both interestingly and effectively either with or without a formal introduction, but learning to handle the convention functionally often helps the student to gain a sense of structure. A valuable exercise for the student is the analysis of the various means by which authors such as Emerson, E. B. White, or even Shakespeare introduce their works. A simple mnemonic device for writing initial statements is the formula ABCD: *A*pproach, *B*ackground, *C*entral theme, and *D*ivisions of the essay. The student must realize that these elements are not of equal importance in the treatment of every topic; but used flexibly, the device can help him to present his ideas in a logical and effective manner. If the teacher consistently points out padding and mere attention to form, the student will begin to eliminate the artificial, the superfluous, and the stultifying from his introductions. As he becomes more expert, he will be able to determine for himself the most effective means of beginning his paper.

Focusing the Subdivisions

The student must learn to formulate a central idea for each of the subdivisions of his theme and maintain a constant check on the purpose each serves in the paper as a whole. However, calling for a "topic sentence" will probably elicit the mere statement that such-and-such is to be discussed. The student must learn to pivot his discussion upon some critical aspect of his central theme and present it in a manner appropriate to his purpose. Having outlined a simple plan beforehand will prove useful here; but the criticism of his classmates and/or the teacher and the process of revision that results are invaluable. For these reasons, it is imperative that the teacher carefully evaluate the student's logic, thought content, and method of development as he reviews each paper and not merely confine himself to a brief comment on the content of the essay and a detailed notation of the mechanical errors.

Using Transition

Since the principles of transition are not always obvious to students, instruction should be given in perceiving relationships and the means by which they can be indicated to the reader. For example, experimenting with the placement of elements within a sentence will show the student the effect of order on meaning, both in terms of clarity and emphasis. The analysis of transitional devices in complete selections from literature can help him to move more effectively from the development of one aspect of his theme to another. And having the student indicate the relationship between the elements of his essay by words or clearly expressed transition can help him to guard against mechanically linking where no logical link exists. Where transitions seem awkward or unnecessary, he may need to see that either he has not developed his idea to the required degree of complexity or he has selected a subject which does not permit detailed treatment of it.

Using Logic

If he is to become a responsible writer, the student must learn to support his ideas with substantial and relevant detail. He will need a certain amount of conscious training in logic in order to evaluate both his thesis and his argument. He must come to

recognize when he is attempting to demonstrate the indisputable or explain the obvious; and he must learn to distinguish between demonstrable propositions and those — such as expressions of taste — which are not. He must learn to determine how much evidence is needed to prove a point or clarify an idea. He must avoid such fallacies in reasoning as begging the question, non sequitur, and arguing from analogy. He must be precise in his wording. And he must be aware of his reader and come to anticipate the reader's questions and rebuttals.

Developing Style

Once the student has acquired the habit of purposeful, responsible writing, he should be expected to give more attention to the style and tone of his work. He will have developed a degree of sensitivity to the elements of style and an author's conscious use of them through his study of literature, and he will probably have begun to demonstrate some understanding and use of these devices in his own writing. But as he progresses, some instruction should be given to reinforce his awareness of the effects he can produce by varying the structure of his sentences, choosing his words and phrases carefully, and using figurative language.

Through exercises in sentence variation and the analysis of selected models, for example, he should become more fully aware of the relationship between form and meaning. Changing a balanced compound sentence to a complex sentence, substituting a mark of punctuation for a conjunction, or shifting the order of sentences of a particular type within a paragraph should increase the student's awareness of the role which structure and order play in translating the writer's meaning to the reader. The examination of good models and specific practice in his own writing should help him to see the effects he can achieve through the skillful manipulation of sentence elements.

Additional training in word choice will also be necessary; for although AP students usually have command of fairly large vocabularies, they are not always skilled in choosing the word or phrase which says what they want to say in language appropriate for their purpose and audience. Often they do not recognize the value of simplicity in their writing. Emphasis should be given, therefore, to the importance of word association and

suitability of language to the style, tone, and level of diction of the composition as a whole.

Some attention should also be given to the use of figures of speech and other poetic devices. After he has studied literary selections which illustrate the effective use of these techniques, the student might be asked to experiment with them in his own work by writing an original satire, replying to an essay in the tone and style used by the essayist, or rewriting a passage from the work of one author in the style of another. Similarly, he might be asked to experiment with the use of sound — with consonance, assonance, and alliteration; with balance and rhythm; with repetition and juxtaposition — in an effort to let " the sound echo the sense," as Pope suggests.

As he progresses, the student should become more conscious in his use of diction, tone, and style in order to give emphasis, change of pace, emotional effect, or simply personal flavor to his writing.

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The criteria in a course for the Advanced Placement Program in English are high. They must be high; because it is, in reality, a first-year college course for which, if he does well on the examination, the student may receive advanced placement and/or credit toward graduation from the college of his choice. However, while the standards of critical reading and writing indicated on the preceding pages have been designed to stretch young minds, the course should not be considered a failure if the high school students enrolled in it do not reach the ultimate in adult perceptions.